

MISCELLANIOUS
Poetical NOVELS
OR
TALES,
RELATING
Many pleasing and instructive Instances
OF
WIT and GALLANTRY
IN BOTH
SEXES:

Suited to the *Belle-Humeur* of the Present Age:

Adorn'd with Sculptures.



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16

*The COVETOUS-DAME,
and the GENTLEMAN-
SHARPER.*



IS never in List among Mi-
racles put,

To find a Man chow'd by a
Jilting young Slut.

Honest *Gratis* is dead, there's
no Love without Pay,

You must down with your
Guineas before you can Play,

But this, by the way, we intend of Coquets,
Who intangle our Senses in Peticoat Nets.

Yet for the Male Honour I'll make you confess,
That we are not so destitute quite of Address,
But that One of a hundred, at least, we may hit,
And give them a Touch of our Masculine Wit.

10

B

For

For this, in Example, one *Gulphar* I bring,
 A sharpening Young Dog, of a delicate Sting.
 A Fellow that knew how to wheedle the Fair,
 And yet of his Purse have a sensible Care.
 You Sons of the Sword, and all you that resort
 In Crowds to the *Mall*, the Parade and the Court,
 You may take out a Lesson from hence, if you please,
 To practise hereafter at Leisure and Ease.
 If your Brains be not addled, but nimble and quick;
 'Tis Fifty to One you improve by the Trick. 20
 Tho' I know there are many already too fine,
 To need any Hint from this Story of mine :
 So transcendently quick, and so nicely acute,
 My Tale might before 'em stand modestly Mute.
 Of a *Gulphar* can few stand in need, in a Town
 Where so many Sharpers still throng up and down.

The identical Hero whom now we intend,
 Of *Gasparin* was a most intimate Friend :
 And so very much had frequented his House,
 That at last he enamour'd became of his Spouse. 30
 Not a Passion in jest, nor a trivial Dart,
 But her Beauty in earnest had wounded his Heart.
 Most charmingly Sweet, and a delicate Creature
 She was, alike Perfect, Complexion and Feature.
 It seem'd, as if Nature had taken a Pleasure ;
 To lavish upon her, the Strength of her Treasure.
 To heighten the rest, She was spritely and young,
 And ravish'd your Soul with her Notes when she sung.
 And the Fair had almost universally reign'd ;
 If Avarice had not her Character stain'd. 40

This

This cool'd her hot Lovers. So sordid a Vice
Once discover'd, their Passions decay'd in a trice,
And yet, to be Frank, 'tis a Fault nothing rare;
In our Age 'tis the general Crime of the Fair;
You may sigh, if you will, but all Sighs are in vain;
'Tis only your Gold can redeem you from Pain.
Poor, amorous *Gulphar*, discover'd at last,
His Passion must keep a perpetual Fast;
Unless with a Golden or Argentine Key,
He unlock'd the sweet Mouth, to say Yes to his Plea. 50
In short, for Two Hundred good *Guineas* she agreed,
To suffer his passionate Wishes to speed.
Of *Gasparin*, *Gulphar* then borrows that Gold
That obtains him the Wife in his Arms to enfold:
It was lent as the Husband just went out of Town.
Who gone; to the Lady our Spark throws 'em down,
In presence of Persons, and naming the Sum,
Prays her give it her Husband when home he should come.
She receives it, and answers she will, with a Smile;
And for Policy took, what he meant but in Guile. 60
And thus having taken her liberal Hire,
She grants the full Joys of his eager Desire.

Her Husband return'd from his Country Affair:
Gulphar tells; him my Friend, to your Wife I took Care,
In your absence to render the *Guineas* I borrow'd.
She was by, when he spoke; and within deeply sorrow'd:
And frozen like Ice, she confess'd the Receipt;
All fretting within, at so sharpening a Cheat.
Gulphar easily found out her Rage, by her Looks;
So gets himself cross'd out of *Gasparin's* Books: 70

And

And taking his Leave, of his Friend, and his Fair ;
Resolv'd in himself, he would come no more there.
He rambles, departing from thence, through the Town ;
To publish in Triumph, his Trick up and down.
Unmanly, to many, this Usage may seem ;
No matter for that, it was Musick to him.
And those of his Kidney, in Bumpers will bless him ;
As oft as he tells, how the Fair did caress him :
And how, when the Torrent of Pleasure was past,
He pleasantly trickt the fair Jilter at last.

80

*The*



*The GOSSIPS WAGER, or
the WANTON WIVES.*



THREE Sister-Gossips, handsom,
young, Coquet,
To Prate and Junket at their
Ease being met;
For greater Liberty, would in
retirement Dine:
None present but themselves.
Pleasantly the Repast,

With easie Freedom, swept the sliding Hours along.

Sometimes a pleasant Tale; sometimes a sprightly Song;
No interruption; all was various Mirth, and intermingled
Rambling in Chat, o're all the Town; (Wine;
From the great Lord, to the dull Clown;
On their own Feats they fell insensibly at last.

10

All three were pert, brisk, airy Wives;
Led libertine and amorous Lives.

C

Yet

Yet strictly kept themselves from all Surprise,
And Censure of unguarded weak and loose Indecencies.

Each of the Three had in the Dark,
Her fondled fashionable Spark.

And two of them reign'd Paramount at Home :
Nor how, or who, or what; nor go, nor come,
Must e're be said to each commanding Dame ;
Nor when, nor why She either went or came. 20

Says One: For my Part I must needs aver, my Dears,
That, in a Husband, few can boast to be my Peers.

Search every where, through Court and Town,
Or all the Nation up and down,
Such another easie Fool

Can scarce be found ; as my domestick Tool.
I ramble unconfin'd where e're I please ;
And uncontroll'd enjoy my perfect Ease.

To this : another, with Disdain, replies ;
How can you chuse, my Dear, but such a Man despise ? 30
A Man ! a Husband ! a dull Sor ; a Fool ;
A Booby ; just fit to be whipt at School.

No Fire, no Metal, in his Make ;
Nature's Jest, and meer Mistake.

Were I as you ; I'd set him, for a Stake at play ;
Or give him, for a New-Years-Gift, away.
Th' insipid Thing, sure, has not so much Fire,
To raise or feel, to cross, to fan or check Desire.

Pleasure and Pain each other still refine ;
And artful Contradictions make things brighter shine. 40

Your stupid Spouse, is such an Insignificant ;
He neither Pleasure knows, nor Pleasure's painful Want.

But

But far from such, is mine: I thank the Fates.
A Man! whom sparkling Wit, and daring Courage animates.
He understands the World; the Town; the Court:
Skill'd in Intrigue; and lov'd, by all the *Beau-Resort*.

And he had need get up betimes,
That such a Head would sooth with empty Chimes.
Yet do not think, because of this, that I,
Thus guarded, am a strict and dull Recluse from Joy. 50
Far from it: This Obstruction but improves
The Poinant Sauce, and higher Relish of adventurous Loves.
Nor with you, would I Spark or Husband change,
For all the boasted Length of your unquestion'd Range.

As this Debate, thus high arose;
The Third, her grave Advice, begins to interpose;
And calms the Disputants. For, she was clear,
That it did plain enough, and evident appear:
That under easie Husbands, Love might reign;
And yet, that Pleasure might subsist, and even conquer Pain.
This weighty Point, thus wisely fixt; fresh Chat 61
Flows endless on: now, upon this, now that.
But each enlarges, on her own peculiar dear lov'd Praise;
For stoln Embraces, by unknown and unsuspected Ways.
At last they all agree, with one Consent;
That each should make a fresh Experiment:
And she, that could her Spouse most wittily deceive;
Should from the rest, the Palm of Victory receive.

And unto that Triumphant She;
To pay their humble Tribute, all agree. 70
Then they proceed in Solemn wise,
To vow, that free from all Disguise,

Each

Each to the rest shall faithfully disclose,
 The several secret Tricks and subtile Arts,
 And all the circumstantial Parts,
 Just in Fact as each arose;
 Nothing lessen'd, hid, nor made
 More or less by Light or Shade.
 And for a final Judgment, they submit.
 The whole to Wise *Corinna's* piercing Wit.
 To this, the fair Cabal agreed.
 And thus ; on their Design proceed.

30

She of the three, who liv'd in most Subjection,
 At that time to a Youth bore strong and firm Affection ;
 Lovely the Lad, and delicately Fair,
 As tender beauteous blooming Virgins are.
 The longing Lovers had not, but by Stealth,
 As yet, and snatches, tasted an Embrace.
 The flourishing Beauties in each other's Face,
 Mighty Love's amazing Wealth,
 Both did potently excite.
 But both were strictly barr'd, still from their wish'd Delight.
 At vast Expence of tortur'd Thought,
 Were new Inventions daily fram'd and brought :
 Borrow'd Lodgings, Sermons, Plays,
 The Water-works, a thousand ways ;
 Balls, publick Entries, each fresh form'd Disguise,
 Unweary'd active Love, as fast as baffled, tries.
 No Arts, to which as yet they can appeal,
 Can treat their hungry Love, with one full Meal.
 Quite tir'd, at last they hit on this Device.
 The Youth appears, in modest Guise,

90

100

Each

With

With blushing Cheeks, and down-cast Eyes,
Clad like a Servant-Maid, and recommended well.

This Artifice takes in a Trice.

He's quickly thus receiv'd with them to dwell.

Yet some Reluctancy the Lady shows :

Too Fair her Maid she sees ; too Brisk her Spouse she knows.

However, since the Maid her Husband seems to please,

The easie Wife in complaisance agrees. 110

Highly delighted He with his new Maid appears :

And at her Skues his amorous Leers.

Gives to his wanton Thoughts too large a Scope ;

And fires his Fancy with fond rising Hope :

On Joys imaginary feeds ;

Vain empty hopeless Joys, that never can be Deeds.

But yet at first he was afraid,

To seem too fond of his new Maid.

In some few Days, embolden'd more,

He struggling throws her down upon the Floor : 120

And though she gets away,

Pursues her still with eager pressing Play.

Embraces, Kisses, every thing employs,

To melt th' imagin'd Maid, down to his long'd for Joys.

So many Gifts, so many Promises,

Continually are given and made.

And such a Life ; and such a Trade ;

She Night nor Day has neither Rest nor Ease.

She feigns at last that she must yield :

Nor longer can dispute the Field. 130

The Lovers thus had firmly now wrought, to what

They long had wish'd, their well concerted Plot.

All ripen'd now : One Evening comes the Maid ;
 And says her Mistress is afraid
 Of Fits and Vapours : finds herself not well ;
 And therefore means to lie that Night alone.
 To have the Wife thus opportunely seiz'd ;
 The Master and the Maid seem alike highly pleas'd.
 They, two, concert all Points : And now the wish'd-
 for Night,

Prepares new Scenes of warm Delight. 140

The Master, quite with Expectation fir'd,
 To his Maid's Chamber just retir'd,
 Was got to Bed : she almost in her Smock ;
 And turn'd about, the Chamber-Door to lock :
 In comes the Wife. A more unwelcom Guest,
 Than she, could never have disturb'd the near approach-
 ing Feast.
 Under the Bed-Cloaths strove He then to sneak his baffled
 Head.

But she, as in a Rage, throws open all the Bed.
 And with a counterfeit, disdainful Smile,

Dissembles artfully her Guile. 150

" In truth, Good Sir, and is it thus ! She said,
 " You quit the Tough old Wife, for the Young tender Maid.
 " Well, since your Appetite is grown so Nice,
 " You shall have Virgin-Pullers in a trice.
 " But not to Night ; no, nor the present Fare ;
 " Dear Husband, pray, excuse me there.
 " And you, my dainty Chamber-Maid,
 " Of a Man's Beard, it seems, are not at all afraid.
 " Against such dreadful Bristles, how, or whence,
 " Could you have found out a Defence ? 160

" Am

" Am I, think you, so old and ugly grown ;

" To be despis'd, and lie alone :

" Whilest you, in Bed your Master must Embrace ?

" No, Mistress, I shall find for you a more becoming Place.

" All in good time, for both I will provide :

" A proper Groom for you ; for him a fitting Bride.

" Both of you, if I should serve ;

" As you justly both deserve :

" You, Sir, should to your Neighbours be a Scorn ;

" As much, as if you wore the Horn. 170

" You, Huswife, should be hurry'd to the Place

" Where such as you find Shame, Pain, Labour and Disgrace.

" Yet now, I think on't, I will spare

" Your Shame ; and yet of both have a just Care :

" Secure you both from Punishment ;

" And both from any such like foul and future Crime
prevent.

" And first, for you, Dear Spouse ; who thus, in Secret, steal
Delights.

" You from my Bed are banish'd for a Time ;

" In Solitude to pass your tedious Nights :

" And by yourself to recollect your Crime. 180

" You, Minion, lest again you be misled,

" Shall be the Partner of my widow'd Bed.

" Thus I, as Witness of your Penitence,

" Can tell the better when to pardon your Offence.

The Husband quite confus'd ; the Chamber-Maid in Tears ;

One fill'd with true, t'other with seeming Fears ;

Stand both surpriz'd, unable to reply,

Asham'd to own the Fault, nor daring to deny.

The seeming wrathful Wife commands away the Maid ;

By whom she trembling is obey'd. 190

The

The Husband thus they quit. And now the Youth and She,
 Got into Bed, possess the Fruits of their full Victory.
 The Husband over-joy'd to be thus cheaply quit:
 And they applauding their triumphant Wit.
 The wanton Youth now plays a double Part;
 Gallant at Night, and Chamber-Maid by Day.
 Discharges both, with equal happy Art:
 And thinks his Work rewarded by his Play.
 And thus, by subtile Skill, this wanton Dame,
 Obtain'd the Satisfaction of her Flame. 200

Now to the second Gossip we proceed;
 Whose weak soft pated Husband every Thing believ'd:
 What e're she gave, for current Coin receiv'd;
 And with his easie Faith, help'd on the guilty Deed.
 Under a spreading Pear-Tree were they set.
 Contriv'd so by the Wife, in order to her Feat.
 Gwillim, their lusty Foot-man, stood behind:
 One, us'd to kiss the Wenches out of Wind:
 A handsom, pert, brisk Fellow, bold and young,
 Nimble and daring, active, stout and strong; 210
 And when 'twas tip'd with Wine, could handle well his
 Tongue.

Nay, meeting her alone, this amorous Spark,
 Had often kiss'd his Mistress in the Dark;
 Pretending still, he took her for the Maid;
 Of her Displeasure being at first afraid;
 Till kindly She one Night those Fears allaid. }
 But as they now were set, breathing the fresher Air,
 Under the Pear-Tree shade, the Husband and his Fair;

" I long to taste this Fruit, methinks, says She,

" Good *Gwillim*, get thee up, and shake the Tree. 220

Gwillim gets up : and having made a stop,

After a shake or two, just at the Top,

The Wag pretends — It seem'd to him, that they

Were underneath in Love's most secret Play.

As if astonish'd, out aloud he cries,

" Lord, Sir, What is't you do ! then rubs his Eyes,

As in amaze : then peers, and rubs again ;

Then silent sits awhile, between Surprise and Pain.

At last, calls out again — " Fie, Sir ! it were

" For You and Madam, certainly, more seemly far, 230

" To be retir'd ; than thus before my Face,

" In open Day, each other to embrace.

" To you, no doubt, it gives extream Delight :

" But, how must I be struck at such a Sight !

" You that on richest Beds and Couches can embrace ;

" What need you kiss and tumble on the Grass ?

" And why so Publick, in an open Place,

 " And just before a Servant's Face !

" You, who to Shades alone may easily retire,

" And quench in private all your secret Fire. 240

The Lady cries — " What means the Prater, trow ?

" Sure his Head turns ; his Brains begin to crow.

" My Dear, the Fellow's mad. What Love-embrace ?

" What Kissing, does he mean, before his Face ?

" He must be Mad, or Drunk. Good Honey, call him down ;

" And make him sensible, or crack his Crown.

" Come down, you Blockhead, quickly from the Tree,

His Master rates, " Come down, and you shall see

E

" What

"What Billing, Kissing, Hugging you can find.

Gwillim obeys. And being down upon the Ground — 250

"Now, Fool, the Master cries, what Kissing hast thou found?

"Dost thou continue still in the same Mind?

"Do we enjoy?

Gw. No, not at present, Sir.

Husb. At present? Thou Buffoon! thou senseless Cur!

Gw. Sir, let me forthwith perish on the Spot;

If you just now upon this Place did not,

With Madam highly Sport, Embrace and Kifs;

Proceeding on to Love's most solemn Blifs.

Wife. Forbear thy Nonsense: lest with Thong or Club,

Thy Back and Shoulders smart with the severest Drub. 260

Husb. Not so, my Love, *Bedlam* shall be his Fate.

I'll send him packing thither strait.

Gw. To *Bedlam*! 'cause I could not chuse but see!

Wife. What didst thou see?

Gw. Why, plainly, from the Tree,

Again I speak it, suffer what I may,

I saw you, Madam, and my Master play

Love's sportful Game. Unless this Pear-Tree be

Charm'd and bewitch'd, to make me Fictions see.

Wife. How! charm'd! that were a pretty Trick indeed.

Husb. I'll try that presently. 270

He climbs with speed,

Up to the highest top of the enchanted Tree.

Boasting to break the Charm on't presently.

E're to the top the Master well could climb;

To hasten down again, he found it was high time.

For well he saw, bold *Gwillim* on the Grass,
Stoutly belabouring his Wife apace.

He cries aloud, to hold : and hurries down so fast,

He'd like t' have broke his Neck for hast :

Striving to have prevented, if he could,

The utmost Complement of all, the Lovers might or
would. 280

And yet at last for all his full post-hast,

Something certainly there past,

Had touch'd his Honour to the quick ;

Had he not fairly tumbled down among 'em, in the nick :

" Ah! wretched Woman ! cries the wrathful Squire ;

Swelling, and almost burst with Ire ;

" What Rage of Lust could prompt thee, in this open Place,

" In almost publick View, and just before my Face,

" To let my Man embrace thee at my Nose ;

" And all thy hidden Beauties nakedly expose ? 290

" Shame of thy Sex ! and Horror of my Life !

" What means my Dear ? what ails you ? says the Wife.

Husb. Am I so poor a thing ; that thus you dare demand ?

Wife. Well may I ask, what I can't understand.

Husb. Tis criminally done, indeed, of me,

T' accuse my modest Wife, of vile Unchastity.

Wife. Ah ! 'tis too much ! Reproach me to my Face !

As having stain'd my Virtue with Disgrace.

The false imputed Crime I must repel with Scorn.

It is too foul, to be with Patience born. 300

Husb. This Rascal here, did not caress you then.

Wife. Me ! you are mad. A Regiment of Men,
As well your Fancy might suppose as this.

Husb. How can this be ! I saw 'em plainly kiss.

What

What? have I lost my Reason, or my Eyes?
Till now, I never knew so strange an odd surprize.
What can it mean?

Wife. Alas! I cannot tell.

Your Reason staggers: Sure, you are not well.
Can you believe, I have so little Wit;
As, in your View, such Follies to commit?
Sure, I might find some Moments in the Day,
Out of your Sight; would I your Honour thus betray.

Husb. I cannot comprehend this wondrous Fact.
Nor know I what to think, or how to act.

This cursed Pear-Tree sure abuses me.

It must be so: Yet, once more let me see.

He climbs again; and *Gwillim* recommences:

With which, the Husband calmly now dispences.

Thinks it Illusion and Enchantment all;

Nor does into the least Disorder fall. 320

Gently, and at his Leisure, quits the Tree:

And freely owns; it must be Sorcery.

For other Cause, it were in vain to seek.

Yet holds it fit, the dev'lish Sorcery to break.

“Nay, since it shews such naughty things as these;
Prompts the false Fair, my Love, we'll burn it, if you please.

The Husband hastens *Gwillim* to his Lands,

To call th' obedient Clowns, with ready Hands,

To fell the harmless Tree. He was obey'd.

The Tree was soon cut down; almost as soon as said. 330

But as they hew'd; one Clown whisper'd to t' other:

“What might the Fault be, of this Pear-Tree, Brother?

None could, or would th' important Query solve:

On which, strange things! the wondring Clowns resolve.

The

The Lady, smoaks the Clown's impertinent Desire :
Bids 'em hew on, and make Provision for the Fire :
Their Business was to Fell, not to Enquire.
And thus the second Jilt, by Trick, her Fame
Preserv'd, her Love enjoy'd, her Husband overcame.
Now show we, how the Third supports her Claim.

The third young Gossip, beautiful and fair, 341
And full as much Coquet as t' other were,
Had Assignations at some private Friends ;
Where secretly she had her Ends.

They're foolish Prostitutes, frequent the Stews :
The Wise have quiet, secret Rendezvous.

Our wary She, thus wisely gratifies her Flame ;
And thus from Censure guards her Fame.

One of her favourite Lovers, high in Grace,
Meets her upon a time, at some such Place : 350

Where, tho' his Passion's utmost Rage,

Nothing hindred to assuage ;

He could not pleas'd nor quiet be :

Thinking no Pleasures full, that were not free.

Proposes therefore, for intire Delight,

To pass alone with her one dear, one happy Night.

" One happy Night, my Love, says She ;

" Two such thou shalt enjoy with me.

" The Management to me commit :

" In Love-Intrigues, doubt not a Woman's Wit. 360

" My Husband, for those Nights, I'll certainly remove ;

" And in his place receive and entertain my Love.

A lavish Promise, yet she kept it well ;

Removing every Obstacle beset.

Well, had she need to mind her Hits:
 And tightly muster up her Wits.
 For she had wedded such a Spouse,
 As never car'd to quit the House:
 Loving evermore to dwell,
 Like a close Snail, snug in his Shell, 370

One, who'd renounce the greatest Place at Court;

Rather than go a Journey for't.

But she, good Lady, of a different Strain,

Would travel into *France* or *Spain*,

Much rather than supply her Wants too near:

As only prizing things remote and dear.

One preconcerted Night, before she went to Bed,

She to her Toe fixes a Thread,

Whose t'other end, pass'd through the Floor,

Was fasten'd to the Knocker of the Door. 380

Then goes to Bed, pretends to sleep;

But, as if restless, she does such a bustling keep,

She wakes her Husband quite: who, starting in his Bed,

Feels by chance the fatal Thread.

This gives a thousand Doubts; whose anxious Pain,

Suffers him not to sleep again.

A Thread! so fastned! sure some Mystery

Must needs depend upon't. Well, he must up and see.

Then tracing the suspected Thread,

From her Toe, within the Bed, 390

Down to its fastning at the Door.

He thinks the Case is plain; nor needs there more.

His springing Jealousy now makes it seem

Most evident, and visible to him,

That

That by this Thread, he's certainly betray'd :

And she has vilely stain'd his Bed.

This Thread, must needs be meant, to let her know,

When her Lover was below :

To whom She silently was to have crept,

While he, good Man, alone had soundly slept. 400

No Sense, for placing the mysterious Thread,

Finds he, but the Pollution of his Bed.

Needs must it be, his Highness Cuckoldom,

Was on a Visit to his Mansion come.

An Honor, he had studiously declin'd ;

Had he but smok'd it in the Wind.

Per-suaded thus, he arms him Cap-a-pee,

To find and punish this Indignity.

Resolving, he that dar'd to pull the ominous Thread,

Should, *ipso facto*, instantly be Dead. 410

Too mild a Fate, he thought, for who desires

To make poor Cuckolds of substantial Squires.

While thus the Husband, in his jealous Mood,

At Watch and Ward in Armour stood,

Acting the Sentinel at Home ;

And waiting one, that never was to come :

The happy Lover had admittance found ;

Let in by a fair Damsel under Ground,

From a subterranean Gate,

Ascended to a more exalted State : 420

And taken to his Lady's Shrine,

Was extasy'd with Love and Wine.

Where they pass'd the happy Night,

In all that Lovers term Delight.

Nothing

Nothing to disturb their Game;
 Till busie Day to interrupt 'em came.
 The Morning come, and the Gallant away,
 Our Spouse returns soon after peep of Day;
 And tells his Wife; he had been forc'd from Bed,
 By rising Vapours, and a swimming Head. 430
 So all was calm and quiet as before.
 And not a word of Thread, or Toe, or Door.

Some two Days being past, the wanton Gossip ties
 The Thread again. Away the Husband flies
 To his old Post. To his, the Gallant hies;
 And all the Duty perfectly supplies.
 What height of Joy! what transport of Delight!
 Our happy Lovers gain a second Night!
 The second, passing gently like the first:
 For a third Night, in few Days more, they thirst. 440
 Well, a third Night they pass in equal Bliss.
 Had ever Lovers such kind Luck as this!
 But lest too fickle Fortune, seldom long

Perfisting with Delights to throng,
 Should frown their fleeting Happiness away;
 Wisely at the third Night, the Lovers bound their Play.

This Comedy, had no more Acts than three;
 And yet, was perfect Comedy.
 This third concluding time, about the midst of Night,
 The Gallant chanc'd to take his Flight. 450
 He safe retir'd; by joynt concert,
 One of his Men is sent to act the finishing Part.
 He pulls the fatal guarded Thread.
 The Husband thinks to strike him dead:

Seizes

Seizes him, with raging Force.

Nor, in his Passion, thinks upon Remorse.

But, with redoubling Strength and Rage, thrusts him into
the House.

The trembling Lad, with humble Gesture bows.

A Hurricane of Fury through the Apartment flies.

Low at his Feet, the prostrate Footman lies.

460

The Lady hears the wrathful Noise ;

Distinguishes her Husband's Voice :

Runs, as the Storm directs, to interpose ;

And save the trembling Youth, from mis-intended Blows.

The Youth, in humble modest wife,

Not daring to advance his Eyes,

With much Reluctancy confess,

He to the Chamber-Maid address :

And drew that Thread ; the Signal he was there ;

On which, at her fixt Station, She was instantly to appear.

Adding, they had a Marriage-Contract past :

471

Which might, he hop'd, excuse a Fault (not meant a
Crime) at last.

The Mistress turning to her Maid,

With well dissembled Anger, frowning said ;

Then I, at last, (by chance) the Reason have descry'd ;

Why Thread, the other Day, upon your Toe was ty'd.

I did the like to mine ; Hoping that way to find,

What Man had won you to his Mind.

But well, it seems, he is your Spouse.

This Moment therefore quit the House.

480

The Husband, quite pleas'd, was kinder yet than so :

And says, 'tis better they too-morrow go.

All things intirely hush'd ; after some sportful Days,

They part, with Open Gifts : and secret Thanks and Praise.

The Husband generously presents his Maid :
And nobly is the Footman by his Master paid.
The Couple thus Endow'd ; are by the Parson blest ;
And then proceed, to consummate the rest.
Thus the third Gossip notably concludes,
With Wit and Skill, her active Part of the three Interludes.

Now, find the Judge will venture to decide, 491
So nice an equal Cause, on either side.
Corinna found the Cause so intricate,
She would not hazard to determine it.
The bold, blind Ignorant, perhaps, may very quickly solve
The knotty Point: the Wiser, long revolve.
Each of the Dames appears with so much Sense ;
'Tis hard to know, on whom to place Preeminence.
Thus, still, the Suit depends ; and long it will ;
Supported thus, by equal Art and Skill. 500

F I N I S.